LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1. (Withdrawn) A method of downregulating the inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B wherein the downregulation is achieved by introducing follistatin into said mammal.

2. (Withdrawn) A method of therapeutically treating a condition characterized by an aberrant, unwanted or otherwise inappropriate inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B wherein the downregulation is achieved by follistatin into said mammal.

3-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6 wherein said wound healing is associated with surgery or burns.

9. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein said inflammatory response is a systemic inflammatory response.

10. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1 wherein said inflammatory response is acute.

11-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 10 wherein said acute systemic inflammatory response occurs in the context of systemic inflammatory response syndrome.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 13 wherein said systemic inflammatory response syndrome is sepsis, septicaemia, toxic shock, septic shock, tissue trauma, meningitis or

appendicitis.

15. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein said inflammatory response is a chronic response.

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 15 wherein said chronic inflammatory response is multiple sclerosis, inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, psoriasis or wound healing.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1 wherein said downregulation of the inflammatory response is achieved by modulating the pro-inflammatory cytokine cascade.

19. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18 wherein said pro-inflammatory cytokine cascade corresponds to the expression of TNFα, IL-1 and/or IL-6.

20. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1-16 wherein said modulation is up regulation of activin functional activity and said up regulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal a nucleic acid molecule encoding activin or functional equivalent, derivative, or homologue thereof or the activin expression product or functional fragment, derivative, mutant or variant thereof.

21. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1-19 wherein said modulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal a proteinaceous or non-proteinaceous molecule which modulates transcriptional and/or translational regulation of the activin gene.

22. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1-16 wherein said modulation is up regulation of activin functional activity and said up regulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal a proteinaceous or non-proteinaceous molecule which functions as an agonist of the activin expression product.

23-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 23 wherein said antagonist is an anti-activin antibody.

28. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 27 wherein said antibody is directed to the β_A subunit of activin.

29. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 27 wherein said antibody is directed to the β_B subunit of activin.

30. (Withdrawn) The method according to claims 1 wherein said mammal is a human.

31-60. (Cancelled)

61. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, wherein said follistatin is either follistatin isoform 288 or follistatin isoform 315.

62-64. (Cancelled)

65. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 2 wherein said inflammatory response is acute.

66-67. (Cancelled)

68. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 2 wherein said downregulation of ~~the~~ inflammatory response is achieved by modulating the pro-inflammatory cytokine cascade.

69. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 2 wherein said pro-inflammatory cytokine cascade corresponds to the expression of TNFα, IL-1 and/or IL-6.

70. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 2 wherein said mammal is a human.

71. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 2, wherein said follistatin is follistatin 288 or follistatin 315.

72. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the inflammatory systemic response occurs in the context of septic shock, toxic shock, septicaemia, or meningitis.

73. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, wherein the inflammatory systemic response occurs in the context of septic shock, toxic shock, septicaemia, or meningitis.

74. (Amended Herein) A method of downregulating the inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B wherein the downregulation is achieved by introducing follistatin into said mammal, and wherein the inflammatory response occurs in the context of ~~septic shock, toxic shock, septicaemia, meningitis, organ reperfusion,~~ lung transplantation, ~~traumatic brain injury, inflammatory bowel disease,~~ severe acute respiratory distress syndrome or asthma.

75. (Amended Herein) A method of therapeutically treating a condition characterized by an aberrant, unwanted or otherwise inappropriate inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B wherein the downregulation is achieved by administering follistatin to said mammal, and wherein the inflammatory response occurs in the context of ~~septic shock, toxic shock, septicaemia, meningitis, organ reperfusion,~~ lung transplantation, ~~traumatic brain injury, inflammatory bowel disease,~~ severe acute respiratory distress syndrome or asthma.

76. (Amended Herein) A method of downregulating the inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B wherein the downregulation is achieved by introducing follistatin isoform 288 or follistatin isoform 315 into said mammal, and wherein the inflammatory response occurs in the context of ~~septic shock, toxic shock, septicaemia, meningitis, organ reperfusion,~~ lung transplantation, ~~traumatic brain injury, inflammatory bowel disease,~~ severe acute respiratory distress syndrome or asthma.

77. (Amended Herein) A method of therapeutically treating a condition characterized by an aberrant, unwanted or otherwise inappropriate inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B wherein the downregulation is achieved by administering follistatin isoform 288 or follistatin isoform 315 to said mammal, and wherein the inflammatory response occurs in the context of ~~septic shock, toxic shock, septicaemia, meningitis, organ reperfusion,~~ lung transplantation, ~~traumatic brain injury, inflammatory bowel disease,~~ severe acute respiratory distress syndrome or asthma.

78. (Amended Herein) A method of downregulating the inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B wherein the downregulation is achieved by introducing follistatin into said mammal, and wherein the inflammatory response ~~is a nonfibrotic inflammatory response~~ occurs in the context of aberrant, unwanted or otherwise inappropriate acute inflammation of the airways.